

Examiner but, in the Advisory Action mailed July 16, 2001, the Examiner set forth arguments as to why the amended claims would be rejected if re-presented.

A shortened statutory period for response to the February 7, 2001 Office Action was set for May 7, 2001. The Amendment under 37 CFR 1.116 was accompanied by a Petition for a two-month extension of time and the petition fee of \$390.00, extending the deadline for response to July 7, 2001. Applicants here submit, with the RCE, a Petition for a further one-month extension of time, and the petition fee of \$110.00.

REMARKS

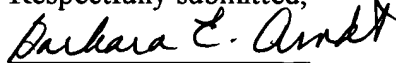
This Preliminary Amendment accompanies a Request for Continued Prosecution of the above-identified patent application.

In the Advisory Action mailed July 16, 2001, the Examiner reiterated his rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Lavitrano in view of Kuretake. Applicants respectfully submit that the Advisory Action continues to misinterpret applicants' invention and amended claims. Applicants hereby reiterate their arguments set forth in the Amendments of July 11, 2000, November 22, 2000 and June 18, 2001.

In the interests of expediting further prosecution of this RCE application, applicants respectfully request a personal interview with the Examiner at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office at the Examiner's convenience. Applicants will contact the Examiner to determine a date and time for the requested interview.

Entry of this Preliminary Amendment and the personal interview request are believed to be proper and are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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